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CHINMAYA MISSION LOS ANGELES

Vedanta, Wisdom, Spiritual

Chinmaya Rameshwaram

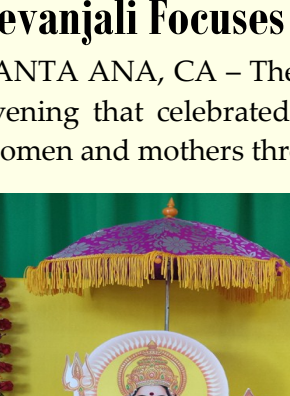
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Over Thirty Years Of Service To Humanity



Patrika

Chinmaya Mission Los Angeles

OCT/NOV 2013

Upcoming Events

Valmiki Ramayan Talks by Swami Ishwarananda	Dec 16-20, 2013	7:30pm to 8:30pm
Rameshwaram Fourth Anniversary	Jan 18, 2014	8:00am to 12:00pm

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Thus Spake The Master

Actions are the louder expression of thought. The quality of thought is ordered by the nature of our inner belief and faith.

- Swami Chinmayananda

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THINK!

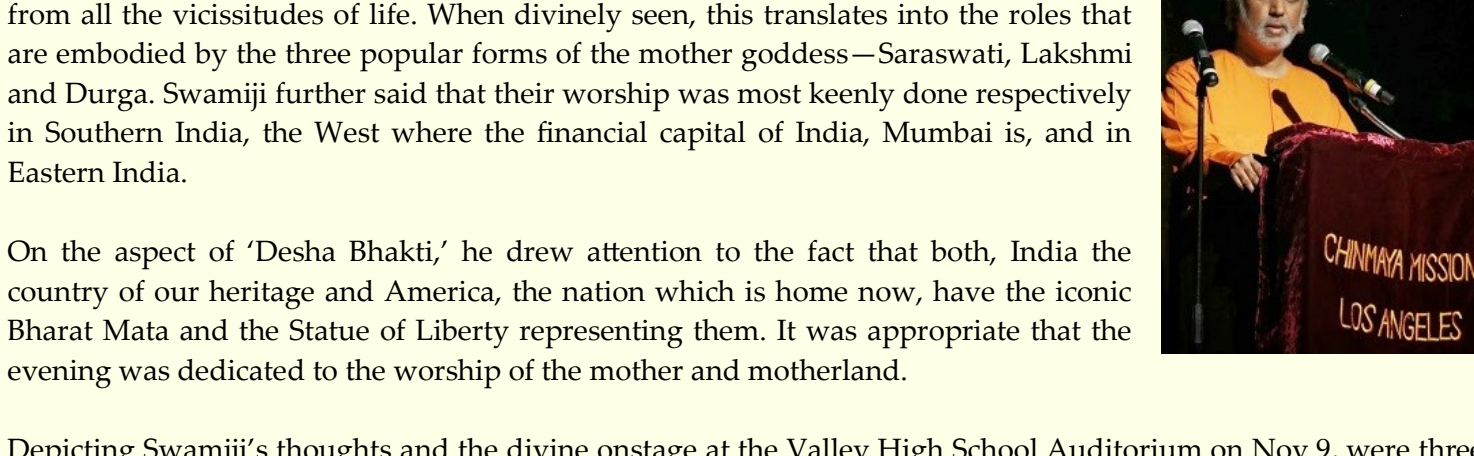
Faith with self-effort will lead us to fact; faith without self-effort takes us to fate!

- Swami Ishwarananda

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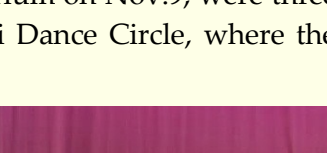
Sevanjali Focuses On Divine Mother, A Grand Success !

SANTA ANA, CA – The annual fundraiser of Chinmaya Mission Los Angeles, 'Sevanjali' held on Nov.9, was an evening that celebrated the woman divine. Titled 'Devi Bhakti-Desha Bhakti' the dance program was a salute to women and mothers through the portrayal of the goddesses in the Hindu pantheon.



Swami Ishwarananda, head acharya of CMLA, at the top of the program paid his tribute saying that each of us are who we are because of the love, nurture and sacrifice of our mothers. Quoting various Devi related Suktams from the Upanishads and other texts, he pointed out that mothers everywhere play three roles: teach and give us knowledge, inspire us and sustain us and, protect us from all the vicissitudes of life. When divinely seen, this translates into the roles that are embodied by the three popular forms of the mother goddess—Saraswati, Lakshmi and Durga. Swamiji further said that their worship was most keenly done respectively in Southern India, the West where the financial capital of India, Mumbai is, and in Eastern India.

On the aspect of 'Desha Bhakti,' he drew attention to the fact that both, India the country of our heritage and America, the nation which is home now, have the iconic Bharat Mata and the Statue of Liberty representing them. It was appropriate that the evening was dedicated to the worship of the mother and motherland.



Depicting Swamiji's thoughts and the divine onstage at the Valley High School Auditorium on Nov.9, were three of SoCal's well known classical dance schools. It began with Nandita Behera's Odissi Dance Circle, where the performers beautifully performed the slaying of the demon Mahisha.



Viji Prakash's Shakti School of Dance in the Bharata Natyam style began their presentation with "Ya Devi Sarvebhuteshu", followed by some fast paced pieces invoking the mother goddess in her various manifestations.



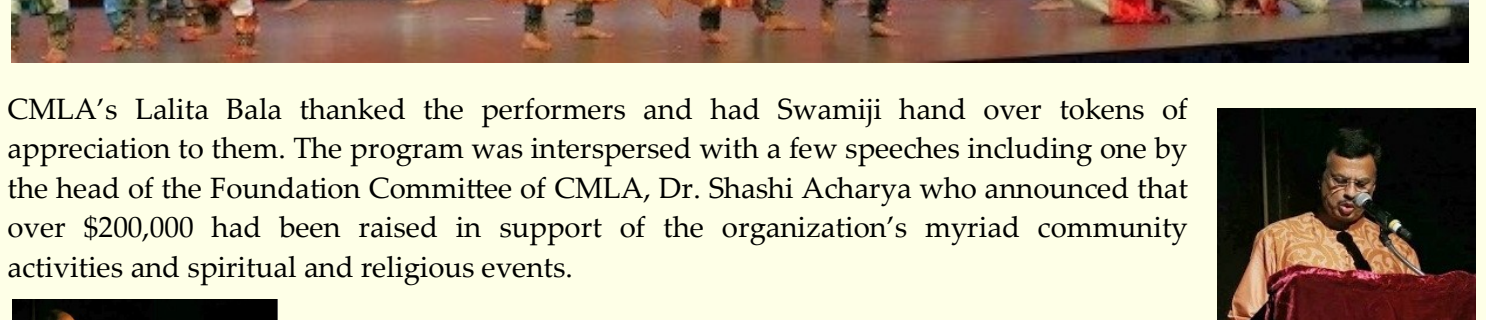
The smallest group of dancers belonged to Ranya Harishankar's Arpana Dance Company but their coordination and attention to detail in Nithyaalyani' was equally engaging.



The folk element was provided by UCLA's Raas-Garba team Bataaka Nu Shaak who did a lively dandiya number that had the audience responding and clapping along.



The resounding final number was the coming together of all the dance groups to the strains of the patriotic 'Vande Mataram' in salute to Mother India.



CMLA's Lalita Bala thanked the performers and had Swamiji hand over tokens of appreciation to them. The program was interspersed with a few speeches including one by the head of the Foundation Committee of CMLA, Dr. Shashi Acharya who announced that over \$200,000 had been raised in support of the organization's myriad community activities and spiritual and religious events.



Navitha and Krishna Rao, longtime and active members of CMLA spoke of their continuing ties with the institution and the benefits they had accrued over the years as a family.



Acharya P.Mahadevi thanked volunteers for their time and donors for their ongoing support. The emcees were Raju Chellappa and Pranav.



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Youth, Community Enjoy CMLA Dandiya

The 10th annual CMLA Raas-Garba event at University High School in Irvine saw a huge turnout of over 1,500 people. A large component of this was a heartening number of youth, all dressed in beautiful and traditional clothes. Other than CMLA members the participation of the local community pointed toward the growing popularity of the event.

The event kicked off with the Devi Puja performed by Swami Ishwarananda, followed by a bhajan sung by Jayshree Gohil, whose team provided the music for the evening. After starting with garba, dancers then enjoyed themselves with Dandiya Raas. The event ran smoothly and was so successful that even the singers didn't want it to end; and generously provided music beyond the cutoff time. Tired but still enthused dancers were there till the end at 1:30 am.



Throughout the evening, there were food stalls where people could enjoy their choice of delicious Chole-Tiki, Samosas, Vadas, Nachos, and Jalebis and, of course, the kids' favorite – Pizzas.

The hard working volunteer team did a wonderful job with ticket sales, food sales, hall set up and overall management of the program and crowd.

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South Bay BV Hosts Enjoyable Diwali Mela

South Bay Bala Vihar held CMLA's first ever Diwali mela on November 23rd. And what an event it turned out to be! The colorful and joyous event saw over 350 people participate in a spirit of camaraderie. Coming in from all across the South Bay area, visitors to the Mela were treated to music, dance, food, cultural exhibits and spiritual messages.

The evening was blessed by the presence of Swami Ishwarananda who in his short talk spoke of the significance of Diwali. He was also appreciative of the initiative and time put in by the volunteers in organizing the event. As children enthusiastically engaged themselves in painting diyas and buzzed around with henna applied hands, adults were seen keenly attentive in yoga enhancing their awareness on health and well being. Visitors also browsed through an exhibit of art by the budding artists at South Bay Bala Vihar and the creative one depicting the Mother Goddess in her various forms.

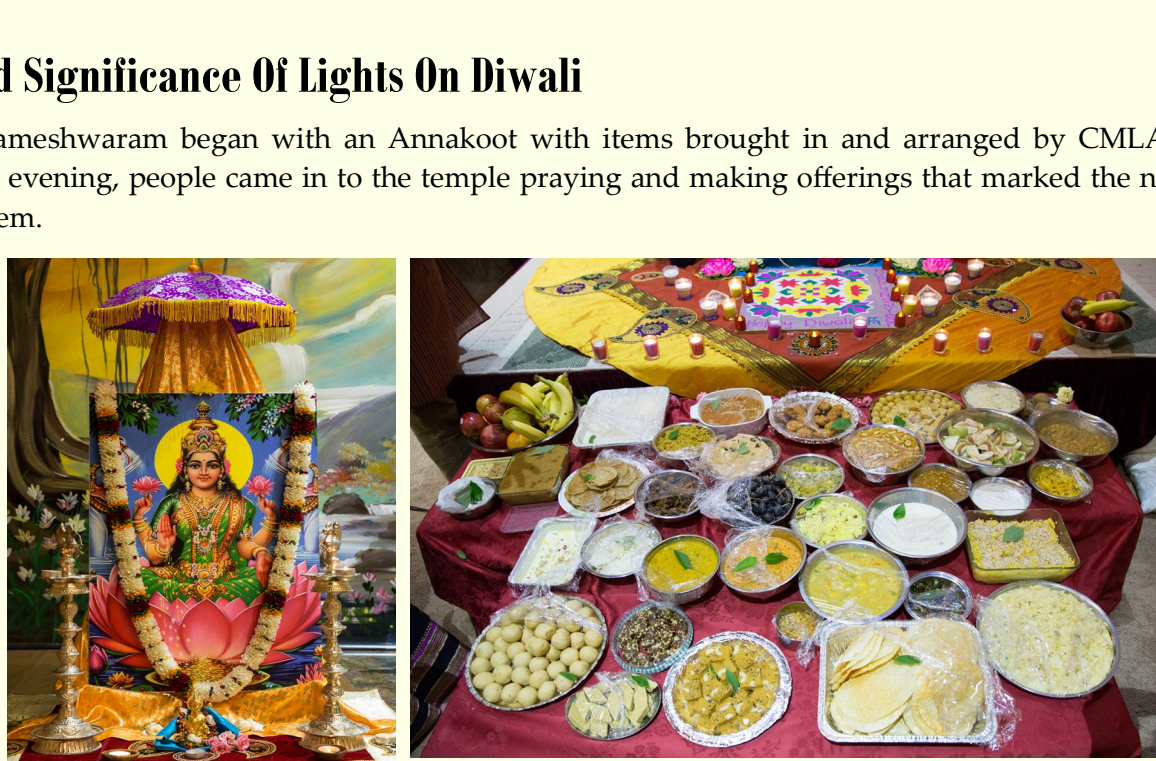


The event was held at the large Temple Menorah (Jewish Synagogue) in Redondo Beach and was sectioned off into four zones clearly showcasing the various regional traditions and activities of India. Classical dance performances of different genres by various SoCal dance schools provided entertainment.

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Music And Significance Of Lights On Diwali

Diwali at Rameshwaram began with an Annakoot with items brought in and arranged by CMLA members. Through the evening, people came in to the temple praying and making offerings that marked the new year for several of them.



The evening program started with bhajans and dhun by the Svaranjali group and then by Swamiji.



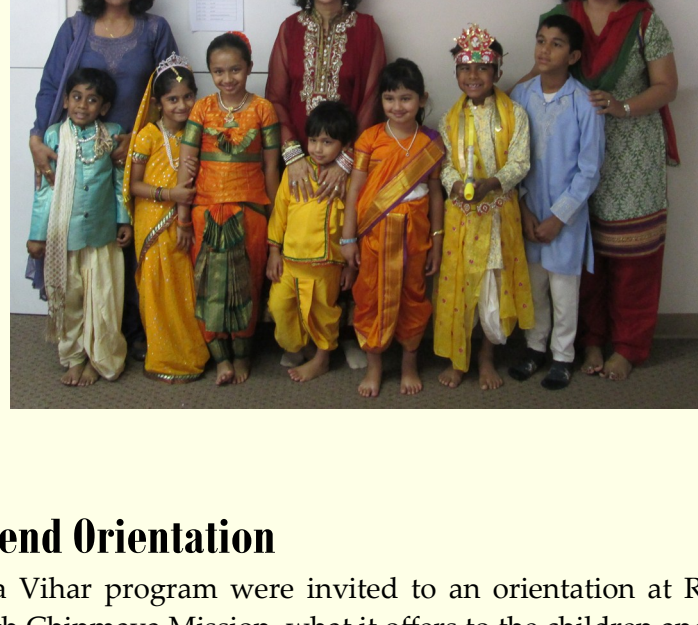
After his message to the congregation on the auspicious day, attendees watched a short video of Swamiji's interview by Asarulislam. You can watch the full interview at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83uf2Uf_Ls&feature=youtu.be

The program concluded with arati followed by the potluck dinner.

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Valley BV Children Pray, Enjoy Navaratri & Diwali

The Conejo Valley and San Fernando Valley Bala Vihars marked Navaratri & Diwali with puja and group chanting of slokas. The students were also taught the meaning and given explanations for the celebrations of the two festivals. Children were encouraged and they came in costumed as different characters from the Ramayan. They were seen excitedly figuring out who their friends were dressed up as! The celebrations concluded with arati and prasada.



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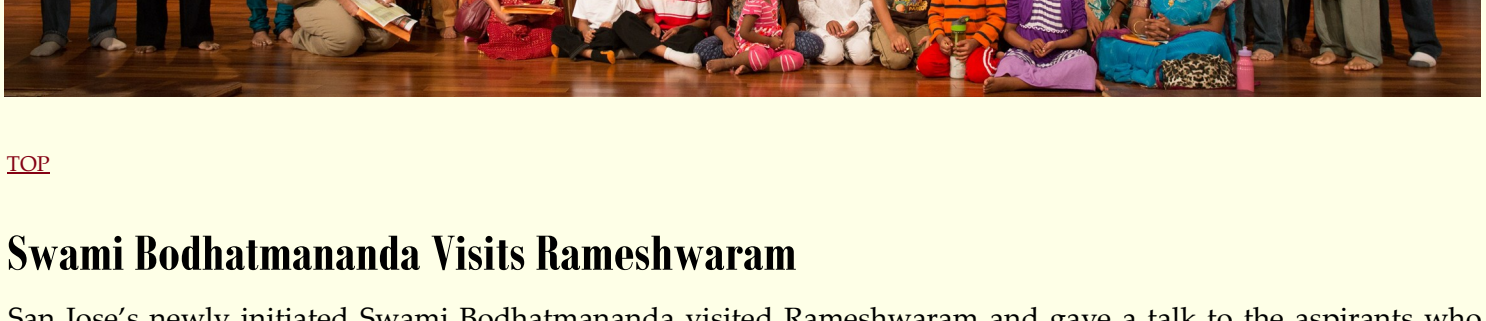
CMLA New Families Attend Orientation

New parents to CMLA's Bala Vihar program were invited to an orientation at Rameshwaram so they could acquaint themselves better with Chinmaya Mission, what it offers to the children and its various activities.

After a collective chanting of *Sahana Vavathu*, speakers explained the role and impact of Bala Vihar. Rekha Acharya spoke of how it had molded her children and led to her family's life time commitment to CM. B.L.Jayaraman spoke at length about the Education Council, its role and responsibilities. He shared information regarding the evolution of the BV, how the baseline for the curriculum was created and then perfected over the years. He said the curriculum was being constantly monitored for its effectiveness so their children would get maximum benefit.

Swami Ishwarananda then spoke on the benefits of being part of CM. He stressed the need for participation of parents and how important it was to be committed as a family! He called out examples of families whose kids had already graduated and who still continue to offer Seva for various activities at the Mission. He also spoke of the cultural heritage that is being passed from generation to generation by CM, saying that its preservation will be our legacy to future generations. Swamiji then played an episode of the teleserial 'Upanishad Ganga' that is being produced by Chinmaya Mission Worldwide.

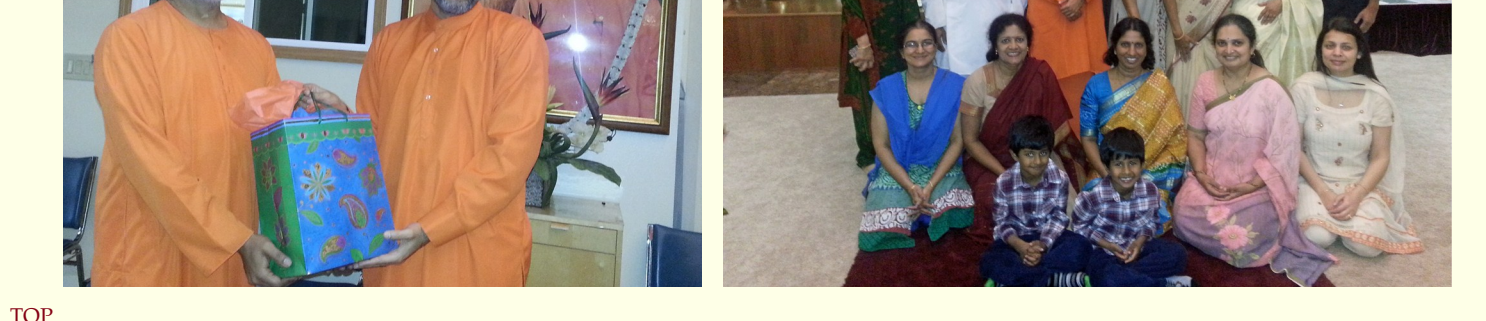
Each family offered their pranams to Swamiji and received prasada of his book, CD and a calendar of events. Everyone then proceeded for dinner where the new families met with each other, and began their journey into becoming part of the Chinmaya family.



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Swami Bodhatmananda Visits Rameshwaram

San Jose's newly initiated Swami Bodhatmananda visited Rameshwaram and gave a talk to the aspirants who were able to meet with him where he spoke on the practical application of Vedanta in our daily lives. The talk was followed by lunch bhiksha.



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Please send articles and pictures for publication to Nimmi Raghunathan at nimmicmla@gmail.com
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